

Case Management

REQUIRED STEPS FOR REGISTRATION AS AN ECF FILER

Electronic Case Files

Use of the ECF login and password to file documents electronically is equivalent to signature on a paper filing. Counsel may authorize an agent, such as a paralegal, secretary, or co-counsel, to use counsel's login and password to file documents electronically on counsel's behalf. Those assisting counsel with electronic filing should take the Court's training and familiarize themselves with the Court's CM/ECF procedures. The required steps for registration as a Fourth Circuit ECF Filer are set forth below.

- **Fourth Circuit Bar Members**

Counsel should register for an ECF account following the steps below. Once an ECF account is activated, counsel will receive an email indicating that their account is available for filing. Each attorney must have their own ECF account. The court requires counsel to have an ECF account before entering their appearance in a case. Check the [Attorney Bar and ECF Status Report](#) if you are unsure of your Fourth Circuit bar or ECF status.

- **Non-Bar Members**

Counsel may register for an ECF account prior to being admitted to the bar. Non-bar ECF accounts are activated with limited functionality. Non-bar members may submit an [Application for Admission to Practice](#) through the [CM/ECF](#) utilities menu. Applications for Admission must be submitted using the ECF account of the individual seeking admission. Current members of the bar cannot utilize their ECF account to submit an application on behalf of another attorney. Once a user is admitted to the bar, the File a Document menu option will be made available on the ECF menu. Counsel will be notified once they have been admitted and case document filing has been activated for their account.

- **Pro Se Filers**

To qualify as a pro se ECF filer, a pro se litigant must successfully complete the [Fourth Circuit Electronic Case Filing Application](#), file a motion for leave to file documents electronically in a case pending in the Fourth Circuit, and be granted leave to proceed as an ECF Filer for the purpose of that case only.

ECF Account Registration

1. **Complete the required [Fourth Circuit Electronic Case Filing Application](#)**

Before approving your registration as a Fourth Circuit Filer, the court requires that you complete the [Fourth Circuit Electronic Case Filing Application](#). You must answer at least eight out of ten application questions correctly. Answers to all questions can be found in Local Rules 25(a) and 25(c), the [CM/ECF User Manual](#) and our [Attorney ECF On-line Training](#).

2. **Register for an Appellate ECF Filer account at the PACER Service Center, <https://www.pacer.gov/psco/cgi-bin/cmecf/ea-regform.pl>.** Unlike District and Bankruptcy ECF Filer accounts, for which you register at the local court site, you register for a centralized Appellate ECF Filer account at the Pacer Service Center. Once you

complete the initial registration in one circuit, you may request filing privileges in additional circuits. Each circuit must separately approve and activate your ECF Filer privileges, but the same login and password are used for all appellate courts in which you register. The Fourth Circuit will approve your ECF Filer registration once you have completed the Court's training requirements.

3. **Unless you or your firm has a PACER account, register for a PACER account at <http://www.pacer.gov/>.** A PACER registration grants you access to view docket reports and documents from a court's database, while an ECF registration enables you to file documents electronically.